



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services
Advocacy and Customer Services

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Michael F. Easley, Governor
Carmen Hooker Odom, Secretary

Richard J. Visingardi, Ph.D., Director

September 2, 2003

MEMORANDUM

TO: Area Program Directors
CFAC Chairpersons
CFAC Liaisons

FROM: Christopher Phillips, Chief
Advocacy and Customer Services Section

RE: Distinction Between Consumer and Family Advisory Committees and Human Rights Committees

Several questions have come to us recently about the difference between the CFACs (Consumer and Family Advisory Committees) and the Human Rights Committees in the local area program. Each exists separately with distinct duties as outlined below.

Human (formerly "Client") Rights Committee

Created by the local area board, the Human Rights Committee is an **oversight committee** charged with the responsibility of assuring the implementation of client rights protection in area-operated and contracted services. The rights to be protected are outlined in Mental Health Rule T10:14V.0504 and include:

- compliance with GS 122C, Article 3,
- compliance with the provisions of 10A NCAC 27C-F governing the protection of client rights, and 10A NCAC 26B governing confidentiality,
- establishment of a review procedure for any of the following which may be brought by a client, client advocate, parent, legally responsible person, staff or others:
 1. client grievances,
 2. alleged violations of the rights of individuals or groups, including cases of alleged abuse, neglect or exploitation,
 3. concerns regarding the use of restrictive procedures, and/or
 4. failure to provide needed services that are available in the area program.

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Consumer and Family Advisory Committee



As directed in the State Plan, the Consumer and Family Advisory Committee (CFAC) is created by the Area program/LME to serve as an **advisory partnership committee** with the responsibility of:

- offering recommendations on areas of service eligibility and service array, including identifying gaps in services,
- assisting in the identification of under-served populations,
- providing advice and consultation regarding development of additional services and new models of service,
- participating in monitoring service development and delivery,
- reviewing and commenting on the state and local service budgets,
- observing and reporting on the implementation of state and local business plans,
- participating in all quality improvement measures and performance indicators, and
- ensuring consumer and family participation in all quality improvement projects at both the provider and LME levels.

One way to think of the difference is that the HRC (Human Rights Committee) generally focuses on issues related to an individual person while the CFAC attends to more global issues. For example, the Human Rights Committee is responsible for assuring that the rights of all persons are honored and deals with each person or incident. By contrast, the CFAC will be more interested in reviewing trends in rights issues and dealing with them in reference to quality measures and/or performance indicators.

Human Rights Committees meet regularly and, in most instances, are staffed by the LME client rights coordinator. The CFACs also meet regularly and are staffed by a CFAC liaison who is typically a different staff person assigned.

If you have any questions, please contact Ann Remington of the Consumer Empowerment Team at 919-715-3197 or Ann.Remington@ncmail.net.

cc: Secretary Carmen Hooker Odom
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